



### Ponds and Rafts for Ducks.

Last year was the first season that we ever used a pond in connection with the raising of ducks, and the result was so satisfactory that we will give an account of it for the benefit of the readers of your paper. We began the season with seven Rouen ducks and two drakes for breeding stock. Back of the barn there is quite a good sized pond, and, as we did not need the water for the stock, we allowed the ducks to enjoy it. They spent their days in it and very profitable days they proved. They found all the corn they wanted at a crib near the pond, and all the care they received was that they were brought up to the duck house near the house at night and were fed a bran mash each morning. More often than not we found seven eggs each morning. We sold a good many eggs and raised over 110 ducklings. So much for the utility of a pond for breeding stock.

We were a little afraid of turtles in the pond, so kept the ducklings away from it until five or six weeks old. They were kept in a yard near the house and the well, so the work of feeding, watering and caring for them was as light as possible. During this time they were at first fed four times, afterwards three times a day, and were given lettuce, onion or beet tops, endive or cabbage leaves from the garden for green food. What a jubilee there was when we first drove about fifty of these fellows to the pond. Such darting about, diving and splashing. Only those who have watched the antics of ducks in water can imagine the scene.

After that they were fed every morning with enough drinking water to wash the food down so they could eat a good breakfast, then were driven to the pond, which soon became an easy task. By feeding time in the evening they were anxious to be turned back, so they could come to the house for supper and to their house to sleep.

Our neighbors laughed at us driving our ducks to water. There was a little yard containing some blue grass and more weeds near the pond that was disced early in the spring and sown with Essex Rape. The ducklings needed no teaching as to the usefulness of this plant, but freely helped themselves as had the old ducks all spring.

When it was not convenient to leave them for an hour or so in the rape patch, the rape was mowed and carried to them. They were as anxious for it as for a feed of corn or mash. We never had ducklings grow faster or seem hardier. If our yards had been so arranged that the ducks could have gone freely to the rape patch and the pond, without being let through the gates, it would have been less trouble and no doubt have been better, but there was other stock in the yards, making it necessary to keep them closed.

One thing absolutely necessary to success in raising ducks is that they must all, young and old alike, have a clean, dry sleeping place. It does not need to be warm, but it must be dry. A little carelessness in the matter of supplying plenty of dry bedding whenever it is needed, and the little fellows have cramp, or with either young or old, rheumatism, and then we have dead ducks. This is about the only disease from which ducks suffer, and with reasonable care can be avoided.

Danger from sudden storms at night, also from marauding animals, can be in a great measure avoided by yarding the ducklings so they cannot wander far from their house at night. Now a few words for the Rouen ducks. What is more beautiful? The drake, with his bright green head, claret breast, ash-gray body feathers, the black of the back and tail, the blue

ribbon band of the wing; then the pleasing contrast of the beautifully pencilled brown of the female, make them birds to be admired by all who see them. Then they do not pull their feathers before picking time. They are hardy, will sit on their own eggs if allowed and make good mothers. They are good eating and sell well on the market.

J. H. Howarth & Son,  
Appanoos Co., Iowa.

### The Poultry Yard Fence.

The poultry yard fence is one of the important features of the equipment for poultry raising. In this matter there has been something of a revolution during the last generation. The old style fence was an eyesore on most farms. It was made principally of laths, generally unpainted. In a short time the wood became weather beaten and here and there the laths were broken. Sometimes an attempt was made to whitewash and repair it. This meant the addition of old boards or strips in place of the broken laths, and this increased the appearance of untidiness that pervaded all. It is no wonder that some of our farmers' wives became heartily sick of chickens and the chicken yard, as the latter was often the most unsightly object on the farm. A new day dawned when wire fencing came into vogue. Whether cheaper or not the wire netting is far more durable than the wood ever could be, and it is far neater in appearance. It is now possible for the farmer to construct a neat poultry fence that will not get out of repair and that will remain good for many years.

The usual method of construction now is to set deeply into the ground some cedar or other posts, which have been previously dipped in tar to the height they are expected to penetrate the ground. This will be found necessary with most of our timber. The posts used, however, should be well dried out and not contain moisture at time of dipping, else the dipping will be of no avail. The posts should be made high enough to carry a four-foot netting, as this will be found to be the most serviceable height of netting for restraining most of our breeds of fowls.

No top cross piece should be used, as this presents a lighting place for the fowls. If the wire is stretched tightly on strong posts it will need no board or joist at the top. If, however, the fowls are to be very heavy ones, like the Light Brahmas, a top rail may be used, as they will not attempt to fly up to it in any event. The Plymouth Rocks and Leghorns will, however, find no obstacle in the way of their wanderings if they can see a board at the top. A good many poultrymen are now saving wire by leaving off the top board, for it is difficult to build a fence so high that the hens cannot get over it if they can find a lighting place half way. We have seen poultry fences eight feet high that did not hold Leghorns.

The size of the yard will have considerable bearing on the height of the fence, for it has been observed that when the area is small and the flock large, the fowls will redouble their efforts to get out. If the yard is large and there is green feed inside, it is surprising how well-contented the fowls are to remain in it.

Two-inch mesh wire is the best for ordinary uses. A board should be placed at the bottom and set somewhat in the ground an inch or two to prevent the hens digging under it, as they find it a convenient place for making a dust bath.

The fowls for the farmer are the best fowls that can be procured. There is no reason why he should not have the best.

The cultivation of the new raspberry plantation should be continued till the middle of August. This will result in keeping down the weeds and sending the moisture into the roots of the plants. The vigorous growth made this year will be seen in the fruit next year.

## FOR GOOD ROADS

A Paper Read Before the National Good Roads Convention at St. Louis by J. L. Merritt of Tecumseh.

What a few years ago in respect to good roads, or "turnpikes," was regarded as a luxury to be enjoyed only by a favored few, is today considered a prime necessity, demanded by all progressive people. Like many preceding reforms, the good road movement has been opposed by obstructionists and demagogues. Like other persistent promoters of great public enterprises, its agitators have been called cranks and crooks, whose ideas were called chimerical, whose objects were looked upon as being personal and mercenary. And doubtless such will always be the case in the launching of new issues upon the sea of public mind. But, like Columbus, in memory of whose great achievement the Chicago World's fair was given in 1903; like Napoleon, the renowned warrior and statesman; like our Jefferson, whose good judgment one hundred years ago enables America to exhibit at St. Louis to-day the deft handiwork of the greatest nation on earth; like Washington, who crossed the ice-flowing Delaware on that memorable Christmas night to gain for us the "sweet liberty" of which we Americans so patriotically sing; like the valiant Captain D. L. Payne, of boomer fame, to whom a million prosperous people are indebted for happy homes; like Gladstone, whose continued strokes loosed the yoke from the yemen of Ireland; like Douglas who secured the passage of the first homestead bill; like Lincoln, Folk and Dennis Flynn, the good roads movement will ultimately win. The Hon. W. L. Brownlow and Senator Latimer, through whom the movement is now materializing, should have the respect and support of the American people.

Both the commercial and social success of a country are measured by the condition of her rural roads. Inaccessible fastnesses and wild jungles are inhabited by barbarians, criminals and beggars. Boulevards are occupied by sages, toilers and capitalists. Good roads beget good homes, good society and good government. Results: Higher civilization greater enjoyment, heaven on earth. Mud and sand are two insatiable fiends that eat up a large per cent of the farmers' profits, especially in my adopted home—Oklahoma.

And Oklahoma, the oasis of the universe, the coming star of the national constellation, comes to this convention as she will go to congress as a dependent child to an indulgent parent, asking assistance. Although amply blessed by balmy breeze and bountiful breast, she is also cursed by roads the worst of any in the west. Suffering as they do an excessive tax, incident to the organization of a new country, her people are unable to bear the cost of radical road betterment. Her only hope for good roads lies in the passage of the Brownlow-Latimer good road appropriation bill, now before her parent, Uncle Sam, and in convict labor.

Convict work has proven profitable where tried, and the Pottawatomie County Good Roads association, in addition to its efforts to secure federal financial aid, will endeavor to get the county officers to adopt the convict law enacted by Oklahoma's last territorial legislature. And to this end we are educating the people in the premises, that they may vote intelligently, for by the ballot only can such reforms be had.

That Oklahoma may not lose by being unfortunately a disinherited outcast, as she seems to be regarded by congress, the benefits of the appropriation bill, should it become a law, the word "territories," or at least "Oklahoma territory," should be inserted in the bill, and the following resolution relative thereto was recently adopted by the Pottawatomie County Good Roads association:

Whereas, Oklahoma is being denied statehood by the congress of the United States, and

Whereas, The senate committee to whom it was referred, eliminated the word "territories" from the Brownlow-Latimer bill, and

Whereas, Oklahoma's rural roads are in a deplorable condition, and her taxes excessive, be it, therefore,

Resolved, By the Pottawatomie County Good Roads association, of about five thousand members, that the action of congress relative to statehood for Oklahoma and Indian Territory is dilatory, discriminating and dangerous; that they are entitled to immediate single statehood; that being denied statehood they should be enabled, by the insertion of the word "territories," or the words "Oklahoma territory" into the good road appropriation bill recently reported favorably by the senate committee, to share in any funds made available for good road purposes, that the delegates from this county to the National Good Roads convention be, and are hereby instructed to confer with other Oklahoma delegates with a view to enlisting the assistance of the National Good Roads association in getting her rights and needs properly and forcibly before the next session of congress.

Additional evidence of the local interest in the good road movement is shown by the following resolution adopted by the late democratic county convention of Pottawatomie county, Oklahoma:

"Whereas, The present deplorable condition of the public roads of Pottawatomie county renders travel thereon tedious traffic dangerous and expensive, and

"Whereas, The present public road law of Oklahoma is inadequate for the radical betterment of her rural roads; be it, therefore,

"Resolved, By this county democratic convention that we endorse the action of the Territorial Good Roads convention, which met in Guthrie April 1, in appointing a legal committee to draft a better road law bill to be introduced for its passage by the next territorial legislature; that we favor the working of "jail birds" and short term convicts upon the rural roads; that we are in sympathy with the Pottawatomie County Good Roads association in its request for federal aid; that we fully appreciate the persistent efforts of its promoters and organizers in getting the objects of the association prominently before the public of Pottawatomie county, and that we hereby invite both the united and individual co-operation of the democratic party in obtaining radical road reform in this county."

At its recent annual meeting the Oklahoma Press association also passed resolutions favoring good roads by federal aid and convict work, and pledged the good roads organizations its hearty support.

And when the editors, the molders of most, and the fearless expressers of all public opinion takes up a measure, its early fruition is usually obtained.

To obtain good roads from any source, organization and education by agitation is imperative.

To interest and thoroughly organize a county even into a good road association requires a great effort, much sticktoitiveness and considerable money. I have spent six months' time and "paid all the freight" in organizing Pottawatomie county, and I consider both well spent.

I will cheerfully send to any good road organizer or agitator copy of membership certificate, together with any further information relative to the organization of good road associations upon application.